

Kid's Healthy Eating Plate

According to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), **one in 5 children** in the United States is considered **obese**. Childhood obesity puts kids at risk for developing asthma, sleep apnea, bone and joint problems, type 2 diabetes, as well as other health issues. There is good news – childhood obesity is absolutely preventable! [Eating well](#) and [staying active](#) are the **keys to helping our children** develop **strong** and **healthy**.

In recognition of September being National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month, we'd like to share the [Kid's Healthy Eating Plate](#). This resource highlights how eating a variety of foods keeps our meals interesting and flavorful. It's also the key to a healthy and balanced diet because each food has a unique mix of nutrients—both macronutrients ([carbohydrate](#), [protein](#), and [fat](#)) and micronutrients ([vitamins](#) and [minerals](#)). It provides the blueprint to help us make the best eating choices. Along with filling half of our plate with colorful **vegetables** and **fruits** (and choosing them as snacks), split the other half between **whole grains** and **healthy protein**:

Kid's Healthy Eating Plate



- The more veggies – and the greater the variety – the better.
- Potatoes & French fries don't count as vegetables because of their [negative impact on blood sugar](#).

[More on vegetables >](#)



- Eat plenty of fruits of all colors.
- Choose whole fruits or sliced fruits (rather than fruit juices; limit fruit juice to one small glass per day).

[More on fruits >](#)



- Go for whole grains or foods made with minimally processed whole grains. The less processed, **the better**.
- Whole grains have a gentler effect on blood sugar & insulin than white rice, bread, pizza crust, pasta, etc.

[More on whole grains >](#)



- Choose beans & peas, nuts, seeds, & other plant-based healthy protein options, as well as fish, [eggs](#), and poultry.
- Limit red meat (beef, pork, lamb) & avoid processed meats (bacon, deli meats, hot dogs, sausages).

[More on healthy protein >](#)



- Use healthy oils from plants like extra virgin olive, corn, sunflower, & peanut oil in cooking, on salads & vegetables, & at the table.
- Limit butter to occasional use.

[More on healthy oils & healthy fats >](#)



- Choose unflavored [milk](#), plain [yogurt](#), small amounts of [cheese](#), & other unsweetened dairy foods.
- Milk & other dairy products are a convenient source of calcium & vitamin D.

[More on dairy >](#)



- [Water](#) is the **best choice** for quenching our thirst. It's sugar-free & easy to find at the nearest tap.
- Limit juice (often high in sugar) & avoid sugary drinks like sodas, fruit drinks, & sports drinks, which provide virtually no nutrients.

[More on water & healthy drinks >](#)



- Trade inactive "sit-time" for "fit-time."
- Children & adolescents should aim for **at least one hour** of physical activity per day. Unstructured activities for children, such as playing tug-of-war, or having fun using playground equipment, are great ways to get active!

[More on staying active >](#)